

My name is Kyndal Ferrell. I am sixteen and an aspiring ballerina. Ever since I was little, Samantha was my favorite dancer to watch in the company. She was always just so graceful, and I remember thinking, "I want to be just like her one day!" In February of 2016, she guest taught one of my classes, because our regular teacher was out sick. I absolutely loved her class and felt that she had really helped me improve even in the short class we had. So, I started taking private lessons with her. We worked primarily on strength, because I was quite weak, but she helped me to gain control of my body. However, she was always very helpful and supportive, and with her help, I began developing the strength to start refining my technique. We worked on anything and everything that I needed to, and throughout the entire process, she never gave up on me or got frustrated. She just kept teaching me everything that she knew. She helped me to become comfortable with being challenged whatever that meant, and always encouraged me to be my best self. Most importantly, she helped me develop confidence and artistry. She would always tell me that technique would always need to be worked on, even as a professional dancer, but along with technique it is necessary to engage the audience. Their attention must be drawn to you because of exquisite epaulement, the brightness in your expression, the life in your eyes, the amount of space you could take up, with your energy as well as your movement, the way you use the music, etc. We worked together anytime that the company was in town and when she was gone I would practice everything that she had taught me (having written all the corrections down in a journal like she had suggested). After she retired, we didn't get to work together as much, but whenever she was in town, we always had some classes. Her determination to help inspired me greatly, I realized how much I truly wanted this to be my career. So, I talked to my parents, and now I am going to CPYB, one of the top ballet schools in the nation, pursuing my dream of having a professional career. Samantha is always keeping in touch and helping and giving suggestions and tips even halfway across the country. I am very lucky to have Samantha as a teacher and mentor, and I absolutely cannot imagine how I could have made it to where I am without her!